(a) whether the size of Defence procurement contemplated by Government is estimated to be to the tune of worth USD 30 billion;

(b) if not, the estimated value of proposed procurement;

(c) whether certain critical areas where India's security vulnerability are high but defence capability is low have been identified and duly prioritized in procurement proposals;

(d) if so, salient details thereof;

(e) the details of commitment made, if any, to former Soviet block countries in the matter of awarding contracts for procurement from them; and

(f) if so, nature of such promises and conditions attached, if any thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) A provision of Rs.40367.72 crores (US Dollar 8.5 billion approximately) in respect of procurement under capital acquisition has been made in the Budget Estimate for the year 2009-2010.

(c) and (d) A modernisation plan in the form of Long Term Integrated Perspective Plan (LTIPP), 5 years Services Capital Acquisition Plan (SCAP) and Annual Acquisition Plan (AAP) is prepared with due consideration to our security concerns, perspective defence capabilities and equipment profile. This plan is prioritized in the light of operational exigencies.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.

Sexual harassment of female officers in Indian Armed Forces

1987. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA:
SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI:
Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Major General Ex General Officers Commanding, 3 Infantry Division was dismissed on charges of sexual harassment of a Captain;

(b) if so, how many such cases have been reported during the last five years;

(c) the details thereof and the action taken thereon; and

(d) the steps taken to stem the rot?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) An officer of the rank of Major General has been sentenced to be dismissed from service after trial by a General Court Martial on the charges of sexual harassment of a lady officer. However, the sentence has not been confirmed due to the directions of the hon'ble High Court of Rajasthan.

During the last five years, eleven cases relating to allegations of sexual harassment have been reported in the Armed Forces. Necessary investigations/Court of Inquiry/General Court Martial (GCM) have been instituted in these cases. Punishments have been awarded, wherever, the charges have been proved.

The Defence forces take appropriate measures for the safety and security of its personnel including women. Any complaint of sexual harassment of women officers is viewed seriously and is investigated and dealt with in accordance with relevant provisions of respective Services Acts.

Crash of Sukhoi aircraft

*1988. SHRI BALBIR PUNJ: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that after the crash of Sukhoi aircraft near Jaisalmer on 30th April the flying of Sukhoi aircraft was discontinued;

(b) if so, the reasons for granting them permission for flying again just after three weeks;

(c) the outcome of the investigation of the crashed Sukhoi aircraft;

(d) whether these aircrafts are fully safe and whether these planes will be proved effective in modern defence strategy; and

(e) the news of crashing of MiG-21 fighter planes also keeps coming, the compulsion of keeping MiG-21 in fighters fleet and whether Government is considering to phase them out?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Subsequent to the crash of Sukhoi-30 MKI of the Indian Air Force (IAF) on 30.4.2009, flying of the fleet was stopped for three weeks to ascertain the cause of the accident. The issues derived from preliminary investigation, after the crash, were addressed and flying was cleared. The SU 30 MKI aircraft is a modern fighter aircraft that has performed very well.

(e) Phasing out of aircraft is based on the operational requirements, airworthiness of the fleet and residual life. This is periodically reviewed and action are taken accordingly.

Logistic support to paramilitary forces

*1989. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Defence Ministry is planning to open any centre to provide logistic support to paramilitary forces in Chhattisgarh;

(b) whether such a centre is also planning to neutralize the publicity mechanism of Maoists;

(c) whether the State Government is providing necessary facilities; and

(d) by when the above mentioned centre will start functioning?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

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* Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.